

TO THE
ASHBURTON URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT
of the Medical Officer of Health, for the
Year ending, December 31st, 1911.

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Gentlemen,—

I again have the pleasure of presenting my Report to you. In it you will find a summary of the General Health of the District, the number of Births and Deaths, the Zymotic Diseases and the principal Sanitary Works carried out during the year.

The District is somewhat triangular in shape, having the town of Ashburton in almost the centre of its base, which extends some miles in an easterly and westerly direction on each side of it. It is partially bounded by the River Dart and the Yeo and might be described as partly Rural and partly Urban. The acreage is 6,925 acres and the census of 1911 gives a population of 2,494, a decrease of 134 on the 1901 census.

There is a woollen manufactory in the district, but the chief industry is agriculture.

House accommodation for the working classes is sufficient and the dwellings fit for habitation although some are old. There are sufficient open spaces and the surroundings are cleanly.

No House to House Inspection has been yet carried out in this district, as an officer was not appointed till December. Systematic inspection of the Urban part of the District has been carried out for several years past.

BIRTHS.—During the year there was 49 births (1 illegitimate), 23 were boys and 26 girls. The average for the 10 previous years is 54. The Birth Rate was 19.6 per 1,000.

DEATHS.—There were 45 deaths, 20 females and 25 males, giving a Death Rate of 17.5 per 1,000. The average for the previous 10 years is 17.6. Under 1 year there were 8 deaths (1-6 nearly of the births registered), 2-5 years, 2; 5-15 years, 4; 15-25, 2; 25-45, 5; 45-65, 3; and 23 deaths from 65 years upwards. The Death Rate under 1 year per 1,000 births is 177.

The causes of death were:—Diphtheria, 1; Phthisis, 4; other Tuberculous Diseases, 1; Cancer, 2; Bronchitis, 5; Broncho-Pneumonia, 3; Pneumonia, 1; Diarrhoea and Enteritis, 3; Nephritis and Bright's Disease, 2; Congenital Debility and Malformation including Premature Birth, 3; Violent Death, 3; other Defined Diseases, 19.

The Infectious Diseases notified were 7, namely, Diphtheria, 4; Erysipelas, 1; Scarlet Fever, 1; Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis, 1; one case of Diphtheria was fatal.

Methods of dealing with Infectious Cases. Each case when notified is visited at once. Instructions are given to the attendants as to isolation, use of disinfectants, etc. Disinfectants are freely supplied when required. Houses are disinfected at the termination of the disease.

Phthisis.—One case was notified during the year under the 1908 Pulmonary Tuberculosis Regulations. No special provision has been made for Phthisical Patients. Patients are admitted at Didworthy Sanatorium, South Brent, on production of letters.

The Water Supply of the District is ample. It is obtained from springs and from a stream which comes from the Moor. It has very little plumbo-solvent action and is free from pollution.

The Milk Supply is good. The Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops, have been frequently visited and no cause for complaint found.

The Slaughter Houses have been regularly visited and found generally satisfactory as to cleanliness.

No serious defects have been found on visiting the Factories and Workshops.

Bakehouses have been kept clean. Several have had improvements carried out during the year.

The Sewers were not extended this year, but extension is under discussion and the sewer outfall is to be carried further from the main road before commencing broad irrigation of the sewage. There are no sewers in the Rural parts of the District, but refuse is disposed of in gardens, earth closets and pails are used.

House refuse is removed in the town on alternative days by contract.

NUISANCES.—10 notices, chiefly verbal, were issued and nuisances were abated.

One case of overcrowding was reported and remedied.

SCHOOLS.—It has not been necessary to close the Schools. The building of new Schools is still under consideration. The County Medical Officer is School Medical Officer.

ADOPTED ACTS.—Public Health Acts (Amendment Act) 1890, Part 3. Infectious Diseases (Notification Act), 1889; (Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis was added to the list of Notifiable Diseases). Infectious Diseases Act (Prevention), 1890.

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

STANLEY C. JELICOE.

Totnes, March 3rd, 1912.

